

MULTIMEDIA



UNIVERSITY

STUDENT ID NO

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MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 2, 2019/2020 SESSION

PEN0065 – ACADEMIC ENGLISH
(All groups/sections)

3 MARCH 2020
9.00 am - 11.00 am
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT

1. This question paper consists of **NINE** pages with 2 sections only.
2. Answer **ALL** questions.
3. Write all your answers in the Answer Booklet.

SECTION A: READING AND VOCABULARY [30 MARKS]**Text 1 (15 marks)**

Instruction: Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Uber thinks it's a 'good thing' for cities, but cities are having second thoughts

- 1 In a recent call with investors, Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi offered what 1
could be considered an admission of guilt to the cities the company completely
ignored in its early days as a **brash**, rule-breaking tech startup.
- 2 "Listen, we're just this company that grew very fast," he said. "And in the 5
early years, the most important factor was speed-to-market, who got there earliest
and scaled the fastest." However, cities that were initially caught flat-footed by Uber
are not worried. If anything, it is the company that may be sweating as cities have
become more adept at making Uber pay for its past and present transgressions.
- 3 Uber and Lyft barged into the public's consciousness with a pledge to end 10
personal car ownership and improve urban transportation, while marketing
themselves to drivers as a fun and easy side hustle. A decade later, these companies
are being blamed for rising traffic congestion, increased tailpipe emissions, and a
growing wealth gap between the rich and poor. Tens of thousands of drivers are
clamouring for better working conditions, while Uber and Lyft argue what they really
want is flexibility. 15
- 4 Researchers from New York University's Rudin Centre for Transportation 20
Policy and Management profiled 13 major markets, including London, San
Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, and Sao Paulo, to get a sense of how cities
are rewriting the rules for ride-hailing. They found that cities are regulating - or
planning to regulate - these companies around four main areas: trip data, revenue
generation from trips, environmental rules, and driver pay. Each newly passed and
upcoming regulation will require Uber and its competitors to make significant
changes to their business practices - changes that will likely affect consumer pricing.
- 5 For years, Uber and Lyft have relied on states to pass legislation that is 25
favourable to ride-hailing and prevents cities from passing their own restrictions. But
that has shifted in recent years and ride-hailing companies now find themselves
subjected to more rules than ever and it is clearly chafing under the pressure. After
dodging a recent congressional hearing on ride-hailing, Uber provided written
responses to committee members. According to Politico, the company said it could
not "categorically list the types of regulations" it opposes or account for how much 30
it spends on lobbying. "Uber said it prefers statewide regulations to municipal ones,
as drivers frequently cross city and county boundaries," Politico said.
- 6 With millions of drivers on the streets in cities around the globe, ride-hailing 35
companies have quickly become the preeminent source of data about how city
residents are getting around. And cities want that data so they can make more
informed decisions about access, equity, congestion, and infrastructure. Most of the
13 cities profiled by the Rudin Centre require ride-hailing companies to submit trip
data as a condition of operating their businesses. Companies that defy these orders
risk losing business. In Los Angeles, for example, Uber's permit to operate bikes and
scooters was recently temporarily suspended because of its refusal to comply with 40
the city's order to hand over real-time location data.

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- 7 Squeezing ride-hailing companies for taxes and fees is also another way that cities can pay for road improvements. New York City, for example, imposes a \$2.75 per-trip fee for all Uber and Lyft trips that occur within or pass through the city's congestion zone. New York City recently became the first city in the US to authorise such a congestion pricing scheme. 45
- 8 For years, Uber and Lyft have talked a big game about ending personal car ownership. "People will not own cars," Uber's former CEO Travis Kalanick said in 2016. "They'll have a service that takes them where they want to go." Lyft president John Zimmer predicted personal car ownership in major cities will be extinct by 2025. But on their way to ending car ownership, Uber and Lyft got sidetracked and ended up clogging cities with more traffic. Between 2010 and 2016, traffic congestion in San Francisco increased by about 60 percent, and Uber and Lyft were responsible for more than half of that increase, according to a 2019 study. 50
- 9 Cities are becoming more adept at extracting tolls or charges for all that congestion and pollution, the Rudin Centre notes. Most of the cities profiled have set strict rules on vehicle emissions and enacted policies aimed at reducing single-occupancy trips in their most congested areas. In 2015, Mexico City passed a 1.5 percent per-trip tax on ride-hail trips, the funds from which help subsidise drivers who switch to hybrid or electric vehicles. Sao Paulo has a dynamic road use fee that charges companies higher prices for trips during peak hours with only one passenger. 55 60
- 10 Drivers too are emerging as a flashpoint between cities and ride-hailing companies. Drivers' pay is being cut in cities around the world, while their expenses are growing. Thus, cities are increasingly under pressure to enact pay protections for drivers. In February, the New York City enacted new rules requiring ride-hailing companies to pay drivers at least \$17.22 an hour after expenses. Uber responded to the Rudin Centre report by touting its efforts to integrate public transit into its app as well as increase the use of electric vehicles and divert customers to emissions-free modes like bikes and scooters. "We work collaboratively with cities across the globe, leveraging our technology and resources to help solve their most pressing issues," a spokesperson said. 65 70
- 11 Lyft said it was committed to expanding access and opportunity in most cities. "We are always eager to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure riders can access affordable and reliable transportation and drivers can earn on their own schedules," a spokesperson said. Nevertheless, ride-hailing companies fundamentally reject the idea that their industry is harmful to cities. "I think more and more cities and countries around the world are coming to the conclusion that Uber is a good thing for the country and the cities," said Khosrowshahi. 75
- 12 Whether you agree with that statement or not is beside the point. Uber and Lyft, and their competitors like Didi, Ola, and Grab, have established themselves as a fundamental part of urban life. For better or worse, they are here until they go out of business which could be sooner rather than later and it is up to cities to figure out how to keep their worst effects in check. 80

Adapted from Hawkins, A.J. (2019, Nov 5). Uber thinks it's a 'good thing' for cities, but cities are having second thoughts Retrieved from <https://www.theverge.com/2019/11/5/20947737/uber-lyft-cities-congestion-pollution-income-inequality-nyu>

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Part I: Contextual Clues (5 marks)

Instruction: Provide a word from the reading passage for each definition below.

Example: assertive in an overbearing way (paragraph 1) <u>brash</u>
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1. a solemn promise (paragraph 3)
2. evading or avoiding (paragraph 5)
3. distinguished and leading all others (paragraph 6)
4. skillful at something (paragraph 9)
5. using something to maximum advantage (paragraph 10)

Part II: Comprehension Questions (10 marks)

Instruction: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- a) What was the pledge Uber and Lyft made when they first entered the ride hailing business? (2 marks)
- b) State four problems that Uber and Lyft are being blamed for due to their business. (2 marks)
- c) When cities set rules for ride hailing companies to provide trip data and to pay taxes and fees for traffic matters, how do these regulations benefit the cities? (2 marks)
- d) How did Uber act in response to the Rudin Centre report on ride hailing companies' transgressions or wrongdoings? (2 marks)
- e) "Whether you agree with that statement or not is beside the point." (line 79) (2 marks)
Why did the writer make such statement?

Continued...

Text 2 (15 marks)

Instruction: Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

The case against teaching kids to be polite to Alexa.

- 1 Should children be polite to virtual assistants? It's a simple question. For 1
most parents and child development experts, the answer is simple, too: Yes, of course
they should. Nobody wants to hear children rudely barking orders at, or verbally
abusing, an adult voice. However, teaching kids to say "please" and "thank you" to
Alexa and Google Assistant may have unintended consequences and raise other 5
questions that are not so simple.
- 2 Today's toddlers are the first generation to grow up without any memory of
the world before ubiquitous artificial intelligence devices in homes. Parents are
justifiably concerned about how these gadgets affect their children. One concern is 10
manners. According to the U.K. research organization Childwise, children almost
never say "please" or "thank you" to virtual assistant appliances unlike adults who
often do. Parents are not happy. But at least two companies are trying to help:
Amazon and Google.
- 3 In April, Amazon introduced a politeness feature for its Alexa virtual
assistant, along with a colorful line of Echo Dot devices just for kids. The manners 15
feature, called Magic Word, is part of FreeTime, a wider range of child-specific
features and content. It is designed to encourage children to say "please" and "thank
you" when speaking to Alexa. After consulting outside child development experts,
Amazon decided on positive reinforcement, with no "penalty" when a child is rude.
For example, when a child says "please" in a request, Alexa might respond with 20
"Thanks for asking so nicely." Alexa replies to "Thank you" with "You're welcome"
or something similar. But if a child doesn't say "please" or "thank you," there is no
consequence.
- 4 At its I/O conference in May, Google introduced something similar for its
Google Home product, as well as some third-party smart speakers that support 25
Google Assistant. Google's politeness feature - part of Family Link, a bundle of kid-
friendly capabilities - called Pretty Please. Like Magic Word, Pretty Please uses
positive reinforcement and reciprocal niceties to encourage manners in children. But
Pretty Please goes further, giving parents the option to counter impolite demands
with the phrase "Say the magic word!" 30
- 5 Both Amazon and Google are doing it right, according to Sheryl Berlin
Brahnam, a professor in Missouri State University's Management and Information
Technology department. She has no problem with parents asking their children to be
polite when talking with conversational agents, to say "thank you" and "please"
when appropriate. "All speaking beings should exhibit good manners; it makes for 35
pleasant and friendly exchanges." However, while Brahnam finds subtle nudges
toward politeness acceptable, she believes that it is wrong for virtual assistants to
"enforce polite behavior by being overly manipulative or by being punitive in any
way whatsoever."

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- 6 These initiatives from Amazon and Google were designed to help parents 40
teach children good manners. But in the process, what are children learning about
their relationship to intelligent machines?
- 7 Being polite to a piece of technology may suggest that AI assistants are
capable of feeling appreciated or unappreciated; that machines have rights; and that
one of these rights is the right to refuse our requests. In teaching children to treat 45
machines like people, we may also be treating people like machines. Telling kids to
say “please” and “thank you” to software, knowing that no feelings are involved,
could be construed to be telling them to to run their courtesy routines automatically
regardless of meaning, effect, or purpose.
- 8 That is not the intent, of course. Parents want to teach the habit of good 50
manners, so that when children do interact with other people, they will be polite.
However, this teaching is applied irrationally and unevenly. For example, parents
also want their kids to be polite when writing to people, and will insist that they do
so. Yet there is no demand by parents to make kids say “please” and “thank you”
when searching on Google or when typing a request or query to Google Assistant on 55
a smartphone app.
- 9 Josh Golin, executive director of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free
Childhood, said, “I recommend that parents not utilise the politeness features. We
don’t want children to view Alexa as a friend or having human characteristics and
forming attachments that will make forming skepticism later on more difficult”. 60
- 10 No doubt, the world is changing and parents need to prepare kids for the
world they will actually live in. Being able to identify what makes humans different
than machines is going to be a very important skill as AI devices infiltrate more and
more aspects of our lives. For starters, kids need to learn that Amazon Echos and
Google Homes do not fit in the same category as mom and dad, but in the same 65
category as TVs and toasters. This parental challenge is part of a much larger one:
preparing kids to cope with a world of digital illusions—the fake, the phony, and the
virtual. Today’s toddlers will grow up in a world of deepfake videos, computer-
generated Instagram personalities, holographic celebrities and virtual reality.
- 11 Preparing kids for the future means more than mere manners. It means 70
teaching them to appreciate the difference between real human people and mere
machines designed to create the illusion of humanity. Kids need to learn that other
people want and deserve our politeness and courtesy. And that appliances do not.

Adapted from Elgan, M. (2018, June 24). The case against teaching kids to be polite to Alexa.
Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/40588020/>

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Part I: Fact or Opinion (5 marks)

Instruction: For each statement, write (F) if the statement is a fact and (O) if the statement is an opinion.

- a) After consulting outside child development experts, Amazon decided on positive reinforcement, with no “penalty” when a child is rude. (line 18 - 19)
- b) But Pretty Please goes further, giving parents the option to counter impolite demands with the phrase “Say the magic word!” (line 28 - 30)
- c) These initiatives from Amazon and Google were designed to help parents teach children good manners. (line 40 - 41)
- d) Yet there is no demand by parents to make kids say “please” and “thank you” when searching on Google or when typing a request or query to Google Assistant on a smartphone app. (line 54 - 56)
- e) This parental challenge is part of a much larger one: preparing kids to cope with a world of digital illusions - the fake, the phony, and the virtual. (line 66 - 68)

Part II : Critical Reading (10 marks)

Instruction: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. State the main issue raised in the article. (1 mark)
- 2. i. What is the writer’s overall purpose and point of view in writing about the issue? (2 marks)
ii. Provide reasons for his point of view. (2 marks)
- 3. List two specific groups of audience to whom the writer intends to convey his message. (1 mark)
- 4. What is the general tone expressed by the writer? (1 mark)
- 5. i. In paragraphs 9 and 10, what is the bias demonstrated by the writer? (1 mark)
ii. Give two examples of biased language used in the paragraphs. (2 marks)

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SECTION B: GRAMMAR [20 MARKS]**Part I: Modal Verbs (5 marks)**

Instruction: Fill in each blank with a suitable modal verb.

Example: It (0) can cause distress or problems in day-to-day activities.

Compulsive hoarding is a behavioral pattern characterised by excessive collection of large quantities of items, even things that appear useless or of little value to most people, that clutter the living spaces. It (0) can cause distress or problems in day-to-day activities.

Dr Kelvin Ng, a consultant at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), said hoarding is a social behavioural problem that requires many helping hands. Being closest to them, family members (1) _____ help by getting the person to see a counsellor or a doctor for assessment to see if they have any underlying mental illness, he added.

"If there is no underlying mental illness, and the person is suffering from hoarding disorder, family members (2) _____ approach agencies such as the Hoarding Task Force to help the person to declutter the hoard," said Dr Ng.

The task force works with community groups to identify those who hoard, clean up their flats, which are potential fire traps, and refer them for medical treatment if they need it. Joyz Tan, senior social worker and centre head at Fei Yue Family Service Centre, said social workers (3) _____ first assess the risk and level of hoarding, before intervening.

"But before decluttering, there is a lot of counselling needed. Many times, the items have a lot of sentimental value and are linked to their emotional health," she said. If deemed necessary, counsellors (4) _____ educate the person who hoards about the impact of their action. A good relationship with family and neighbours can also help to sustain any positive change in reducing or eradicating hoarding habits.

"The individual (5) _____ have their own reasons or history to reach this state," she added. "If we demand that they need to be responsible, it may worsen things. There needs to be a lot of patience and understanding."

Adapted from Hoarders – who's to blame? (2019, October 7). The Star, p. 19.

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Part II: Verb Tense Consistency (10 marks)**Instruction:** Fill in each blank with the given verb in its suitable tense form.

Example: ... Reema Juffali (0) is set to blaze a trail in male-dominated motor sports as the first Saudi woman to race in the kingdom.

Sliding behind the wheel of a sleek electric SUV, Reema Juffali (0) is set to blaze a trail in male-dominated motor sports as the first Saudi woman to race in the kingdom. Such adrenalin rushes were unimaginable for women in the ultra-conservative Islamic kingdom until June last year, when it (1) _____ (overturn) the world's only ban on female motorists as part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's liberalisation drive.

Juffali, a 27-year-old who made her motoring debut just months after the decades-old ban ended, (2) _____ (compete) in the Jaguar I-Pace eTrophy, an all-electric race in Diriyah next month. The female racer, who hails from Jeddah and was educated in the United States, will participate as what organisers call a "VIP" guest driver, becoming the first Saudi woman to race on home soil.

She (3) _____ (make) one of her first appearances in competitive racing at the F4 British Championship at Brands Hatch last April and has only about a year of professional racing experience under her belt. But she has had a passion for fast cars since her teenage years and grew up watching Formula One. She (4) _____ (pass) her driving test after she moved to the United States to study some years ago, and is now one of only a handful of Saudi women to have obtained a "racing licence" in her home country, a mandatory requirement to race professionally. Even outside the kingdom, only a few Saudi women (5) _____ (race) professionally.

Prince Mohammed has sought to shake off his country's ultra-conservative image by allowing greater freedoms for women, including easing "guardianship" rules that (6) _____ (give) men arbitrary authority over female relatives. The driving reform has been transformative for many Saudi women, freeing them from dependence on private chauffeurs or male relatives.

Today, newly mobile Saudi women (7) _____ (embrace) what was previously deemed a male entitlement – fast cars. Many are defying the perception that only dainty cars in bright colours are popular with women drivers. Auto showrooms tapping women clients have rolled out a line-up of cherry red Mini Coopers, but sales professionals say many (8) _____ (exhibit) an appetite for muscle cars like the Chevrolet Camaro or the Mustang convertible. Clad in skinny jeans and Harley-Davidson T-shirts, some women (9) _____ (train) to ride motorbikes at a Riyadh driving school too, a scene that is still a stunning anomaly in the conservative state.

"Many people (10) _____ (be) surprised by all the changes happening in Saudi," said Juffali. "Seeing me in a car, racing ... For a lot of people it's a surprise, but I am happy to surprise people."

Adapted from Saudi woman charting a new course. (2019, November 24). The Star, p. 33.

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Part III: Faulty Modifiers (5 marks)

Instruction: Rewrite each sentence and make the necessary changes to correct the faulty modifier.

Example:

0. Yesterday, a bank officer named Ali Shah Ahmad was arrested by the police who faced seven charges of siphoning RM4.01 million from Hong Huat Bank.

Yesterday, a bank officer named Ali Shah Ahmad who faced seven charges of siphoning RM4.01 million from Hong Huat Bank was arrested by the police.

1. The Malaysia Competition Commission (MyCC) has imposed a daily penalty of RM15,000 for as long as Grab fails to take remedial actions in addressing competition concerns beginning on Thursday.
2. Tesla CEO Elon Musk just unveiled the company's first electric pickup truck at an event, also known as Cybertruck, in Los Angeles, California.
3. My cat, Casper almost understands my mood swings; he seems human sometimes.
4. While washing the dishes, the little boy kept tugging on his mother's skirt.
5. Winning a lottery worth \$315 million, over \$50 million was given to John's friends and family in the form of houses, cars and cash.

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